

BOOK REVIEWS

Plastic Repair of Genito-urinary Defects. By George Bankoff. 1956. Pp. 355 + xviii; illustrated. Pitman, London. 5 gns.

This is an admirable, well-written survey of a very large field of medicine, with some 90 pages of excellently clear plates many in duotone. If anything, the author errs in attempting to include too much and in over-simplifying surgical operations which may well lead the unwary to attempt formidable repairs. The surgical minutiae, however, do not concern the venereologist, for whom the book provides the latest information on possible reconstructive surgery for the many genito-urinary abnormalities that he is often the first to see or recognize.

Part I is devoted to the development, anatomy, and physiology of the genito-urinary system. It is a pity that no mention is made of modern methods of determining the patient's genetic sex by examination of the skin nuclei and those of the polymorphonuclear leucocytes.

Part II commences with the bladder and the ever-difficult repair of vesico-vaginal fistulae, transplantation of ureters, and operations for urinary incontinence. Read-Mullin's plastic technique should surely be Read-Millin's. Hypospadias is carefully described and it is beautifully illustrated. In the section on diseases of the scrotum and its contents there is surprisingly no mention of the modern high ligature of the spermatic veins for varicocele. Epididymo-vasostomy receives scant attention and vaso-vaginal implantation none.

Plastic repair of introital and vaginal atresia are ably described and thereafter come the various methods of constructing an artificial vagina, special attention being given to Schubert's method and the author's own method. This part is concluded with a chapter on perineal repairs perhaps more properly left to text-books of operative gynaecology.

Part III is devoted to sterility and impotence and is frankly disappointing. Infertility is now a recognized speciality in its own right and no useful purpose is served in attempting to survey so intricate a subject in a surgical monograph; nor are many of the recent advances included. Green-Armytage's tubal implantation is so very successful that it deserves to be fully described.

The cost of this book is high for British buyers. It remains, however, an interesting and informative survey and brings within its covers the contents of many scattered and inaccessible papers.

R. H. B.

Serology of Syphilis. 1956. Bulletin of the World Health Organization, 14, 352. W.H.O., Geneva.

This is a symposium on the serology of syphilis comprising eight papers with a select bibliography of 25 pages.

The papers are in the nature of reviews of the up-to-date knowledge of the serology of syphilis, and present interesting summaries of the various aspects, adding nothing particularly new to the subject.

In the first two papers Rein and Reyn review the technical developments in the serological examination of treponematoses, while Harris and Olansky present the advantages and disadvantages of the various serological tests for syphilis. Both Kostant, in a paper on biologically false positive reactions to serological tests for syphilis, and Olansky and Price, in a paper on the modern diagnosis of syphilis, consider that the TPI (*T. pallidum* Immobilization) test is the most accurate diagnostic procedure for the diagnosis of syphilis, and this test is further considered by Nielsen and Reyn, who found that whilst specificity is remarkably high, its greatest value lies in its use as an aid to diagnosis rather than as a test of cure.

Magnuson and McLeod examine the TPA (*T. pallidum* Agglutination) test and come to the conclusion that it has not yet got a diagnostic value equal to that of the TPI test. Technical difficulties still exist and the immunological interpretation of the results is not clear.

Daguet discusses the immune-adherence phenomenon and its value in serological diagnosis. He describes a number of variants of this reaction which is carried out in two stages. The test has certain advantages over the TPI test: it can be carried out in a short time and it is relatively inexpensive. Daguet illustrates his findings from an examination of 914 sera examined by three groups of workers.

The final chapter deals with the problems arising from the transport of blood and serum samples, and Price considers the various conditions and factors concerned in the successful transmission of blood and serum samples by post and by air through different types of climates; time and temperature have considerable effects and careful thought must be given to the size, shape, and construction of blood sample containers.

J. F. W.

III CONGRESO IBERO LATINO AMERICANO DE DERMATOLOGIA

The Third Congress will be held in Mexico City on October 21 to 27, 1956. All dermatologists are invited to attend. Programmes and full particulars may be obtained from Secretary, Dr. Manuel Malacara, Centro Dermatológico Pascua, Calle Dr. Garcíadiego 21, Mexico 7, D.F., Mexico.

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CONTENTS

Editorial	137
The Challenge of Syphilis to Science. EVAN W. THOMAS	140
Survey of the Venereal Disease Situation in France. PIERRE DUREL	145
Venereal Diseases in Canada. E. H. LOSSING and R. H. ALLEN	150
Venereal Disease in Australia in the Post-War Decade, 1945-55. J. COOPER BOOTH	154
Venereal Disease Problem in Sweden To-day. MALCOLM TOTTIE	157
Prevalence of Syphilis in Burma. H. A. TUCKER	159
Radiology in Late Congenital Syphilitic Nerve Deafness. R. S. MORTON	162
Skeletal Syphilis in the Adult. IAN A. KELLOCK	165
A Case of Third Generation Syphilis. G. MASTERTON	171
Jarisch-Herxheimer Reaction following Penicillin Treatment of Early Congenital Syphilis. A. HOLZEL	175
Prostitution and Venereal Disease in Manchester. SYDNEY M. LAIRD	181
Human Tissue Culture Studies of Non-gonococcal Urethritis. DENYS K. FORD	184
Occurrence and Ecology of <i>Mycoplasma</i> Species (Pleuro-pneumonia-like Organisms) in the Male Urethra. E. A. FREUNDT	188
First International Symposium on Venereal Diseases and the Treponematoses, 1956	195
Book Reviews	196
Abstracts	197

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